

SB 88 (DeSaulnier)
As Amended – March 11, 2010

FIREFIGHTER LICENSE PLATES
Fact Sheet

SUMMARY

Upon the death of a firefighter who has a specialty license plate; SB 88 eliminates the existing 60- day requirement for the surviving spouse to transfer the license plate into his or her name. The bill will also increase the fee to acquire or renew a firefighter specialty license plate to bring it in line with other specialty license plates. The additional revenue will continue to go to the California Fire Foundation, which provides emergency assistance and support to the families of fallen firefighters.

BACKGROUND

Current law establishes the California firefighter license plate program, which has become a key trademark within the fire service; enabling only active and retired firefighters to purchase these specialty license plates for display on their automobiles, trucks, trailers and motorcycles.

Current law enables spouses of fallen firefighters to transfer a firefighter license plate into his or her name upon the death of their spouse but only if they do so within 60 days of the firefighter's death.

Given that a surviving spouse's grieving process can often take months, if not years, it is only appropriate that the 60-day transfer window be eliminated so that a grieving spouse is granted a reasonable amount of time to initiate the plate's transfer.

The money collected through the license plate program goes to the California Firefighter's Memorial Fund, which provides critically needed assistance to the California Fire Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. The foundation provides emergency assistance and support to families of fallen firefighters and is involved in an array of victim assistance and public education programs.

It has been over a decade since the firefighter license plate program was first launched. Since then, fees associated with the purchase or renewal of the plates has not increased, while the demand in services rendered by the California Fire Foundation has increased dramatically.

THIS BILL

SB 88 will delete the existing 60-day period so that a grieving spouse is relieved of the obligation to initiate the transfer of the firefighter specialty license plate into his or her name. The bill will also increase the fee for firefighter license plates to bring it in line with other specialty license plates. The additional revenue will be generated for the purposes of sustaining the California Fire Foundation, which provides emergency assistance and support to the families of fallen firefighters.

STATUS

May 11th – Assembly Transportation Committee

SUPPORT

- California Professional Firefighters (Sponsor)
- 4 Individuals

OPPOSITION

None Received

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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